

Performing Locale in Nigerian Rap Music: the Forces of Inter textuality and Appropriation

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Abstract

Scholars of Popular music are now studying how people use music as a channel for conceiving places and (de-) or (re-) constructing locality-based identities.¹ This article shows how arbitrated popular musics can be a native resource for identity construction, as well as how practices of the production and consumption of popular music are concurrently expressive practices for visualizing and performing locale. The discussion will also bounce around musical features of globalization. Consequently, I draw from and apply contemporary cultural theory to the study of popular music concepts like localization, glocalization, indigenization, and domestication to describe processes by which people engage with, appropriate, and locally place, displace, emplace or even re-emplace globally circulating musical products, styles, and genres. Specifically, my analysis of how rappers use aspects of song texts, musical style, and multimedia imagery as vehicles for envisioning territory is accomplished by a fusion of the creative and cultural studies/approaches to rap music. For this purpose, I shall rely on the song ‘Lagoscity’ by the Nigerian rap musician called Tupengo. In all, this article submits that Nigerian rappers understand that the discourse of Hip-hop, particularly rap typically includes the custom of representing locale, which is accomplished using intertextuality to appropriate from Nigerian popular culture, as well as the globalized Afro-American rap idiom.

Keywords: *Nigerian Rap music, globalization, identity, intertextuality, appropriation.*

Introduction

Notable scholars like Murray Forman have asserted that the distinctive practice of ‘representing’ locale using Rap music makes this Popular music genre thoroughly suitable for studying the musical invention or re-invention of locality as well as the musical relationships between what is local and global (see Forman 2000). This approach to the construction or de- / re-construction of geographical identity via Rap is so significant that Adam Krims has called it “Hip-hop’s urge to locality” (Krims, 2002: p. 191). In a later publication, Forman (2002) details the complex and multiple spatial discourses of rap and hip-hop in the USA. Further studies also reveal that Rap is now a truly globalized genre – depicting how local and global forces have been employed on the final commodity. Enter then the term *glocal (-isation)*, which initially emerged in commercial circles to explain the tactics for marketing global products in ways applicable to local sales territories. The articulations and interpenetrations of the local and global in popular cultural expression are now commonplace among scholarly writings in this century. (See for example, Mitchell (2001b)). Forman’s book and Mitchell’s collection represent the significant contributions the concepts and methods of cultural studies provide for understanding how the discourses of rap and hip-hop emplace identity. However, I contend that what is missing from both books is a sense of how the poetics of rap, that is, the musical tracks and lyrics of rap songs actually function as vehicles for these visualizations of place. By contrast, this article offers a detailed examination following aspects of textual poetics such as rhetorical structure and intertextuality, plus transcription/discussions of the musical track of the examined rap song.

Although few researchers have discussed some aspects of the musical and textual connotation of rap, they have, generally speaking, focused mainly on rhythmic organization and sound sampling techniques. At other times, they have also made various arguments about rap as a crucible for a particularly African-American aesthetic (see Baker (1998); Keyes (1996); Rose (1994); and Walser (1995)). Perhaps the most detailed account about formal aspects of rap and representation is found in Krims’ (2000) work titled *Rap Music and the Poetics of Identity*. In this book, Krims uses very meticulous transcriptions of texts and textures of the genre to validate the ways in which rappers and rap producers construct place-based identities, particularly in his analysis of southern U.S. rappers’ imaginations of what he calls a distinct ‘rap geography.’ The expression *rap*

geography simply attests to the power of global flow of capital and consumer culture – the evidence that the local interconnects with the global. The notion of glocalisation is hence palpable when one considers that many adolescents from places as diverse as Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Iran, New Zealand, and South Africa, have indigenized Rap; and consequently re-invented the genre into a medium for creating their respective rap geography (local identities) and expressing local concerns for a glocal (that is global and local) audience.

Nigerian youths are not exempt from this genre and its contemporary practice. Historically, Rap music achieved widespread popularity in Nigeria as early as 1979 with the song *Rapper's Delight* by The Sugarhill Gang.² Thirty years on the genre has become a staple of Nigerian Pop music menu – dominating the airwaves and videos locally, regionally, and globally. Popular reviews opine that the earliest attempts at homegrown rap were ridiculed, resisted or completely reviled by the mainstream. Having listened to some of the earliest productions like *The Way I Feel Rap* by Ronnie (1981); ***Break It* by Oby Onyioha (1984); *Lagos* by Mustapha Amego (1990)** and *Which One You Dey* by Emphasis (1991) I can understand why they got such derisory reviews: the artists were often aesthetically awkward in modern business sense, overly imitative of Anglo-American style, and textually fatuous. Nonetheless, their efforts laid the foundation for such respectable Nigerian exports like TuFace Idibia, 9ice, M.I, D'Banj, Ruggedman, Mode9, Trybesmen, Dr. Sid, 2Shotz, Naeto C., Eedris, and a host of emerging superstars. The following discussion focuses on the musical imaginations and representation of the cosmopolitan city of Lagos in songs by contemporary Nigerian rappers like Vex and Tupengo, as well as the impact of globalization on such cities and its products.

Overview of the Globalizing City of Lagos

The tradition of representing Nigeria and, particularly Nigerian cities like Lagos, in song is a long one. Songs about the city of Lagos, for instance, are replete among such Nigerian popular music genres as Highlife, Nigerian Hip-hop, Rap, and Afrobeat. Many of the songs invoke the different forms of nostalgia that have been constructed in emerging Nigerian popular culture studies (see, for example, Adeleye-Fayemi (1994)). These include the aural equivalent of the cityscape; the genteel pleasures and enchantment of the beauty spots of the city; the boisterous cosmopolitan scenic views of minarets, towering edifices, churches, bridges, and peoples and recreational

facilities. Songs like *Lagos* by Vex (2012), and *Lagos City Hustler* by Naeto C. (2010) summarize the reminiscent representations of the city. Others such as *The L-zone* by M-Piece (2009), and *Lagosians* by Slim T. (2012), implicitly and/or explicitly extend their placed-based imaginings to cover unattractive and pessimistic views of the city in which genteel pleasures are replaced by the pains and sufferings of the urban poor, of socio-economic inequality, and power tussle. Demographically, actual musicians and audiences for Nigerian Rap music cut across class lines, and the dichotomies of the rural-urban origin resulting from a huge flow of rural migrants to the city is a strong factor. Due to this internal rural-to-urban migration, Lagos has seen an explosive population growth from 1.4 million in the 1970s to nearly 8 million in 2006, and is projected by the United Nations to be approximately 13 million in 2015.³ Unofficial estimates of the city's population at the turn of the millennium run up to 21 million souls.⁴ This places Lagos as the most populous African city after Cairo. Despite efforts by the administration of the day, the city struggles to absorb this influx with resulting overcrowding, low-paying jobs, and strain on its infrastructure: all of which are embroiled in popular discourse about the kind of aesthetics that the rise of illegal squatter settlements of migrants portray along the outskirts of the city.

On the happy side, there has been a resurgence of interest in Nigerian popular culture made possible by a dramatic contrast to the cosmopolitan fantasies of the governing urban elite who have embraced globalization. Since the 1980s, and by actively courting global capital, different administrations have embarked on one project or another to remodel Lagos as a 'global city.' The attempts by the city administration and business interests to globalize Lagos can be seen in transformations in the urban form of the city from mixed, multifunctional spaces to rationalized functional zoning, involving major restructuration projects which include the development of major industrial parks, walled housing estates for the newly emergent middle class, shopping malls and cultural centers, all with the requisite accompanying parking lots or multi-story garages. To facilitate movement between all the zones, the state government has overseen the construction of major new motorways across the city, including through historic and densely populated areas. While the project of remodeling Lagos into a global city after the stature of New York, London or Tokyo remains incomplete, the transformations begun since the 1980s have irrevocably altered the urban landscape. Also, the city's global position continues to evolve, often through informal and quasi-legal arrangements that bypass most political obstacles. This opening up of Lagos, and

Nigeria more generally, since the 1980s has not only implied the inflow of global capital, but also of global popular culture, including Anglo-American popular music. In essence, the flow and flight of capital implied that rural migrants to the city were attracted by new jobs and opportunities created there by growth in the textile, banking, and communications industries; as well as (and perhaps, more importantly) a new urban lifestyle that, while not abandoning its base in the rural culture they grew up with, actively engages with the cosmopolitan culture of the city of Lagos. Globalisation thus paved way for mainstream media deregulation in the mid 1990s that encouraged national, regional, and multinational record companies to advance talent within the creative and cultural industry.

Consequently, recording companies such as Kennis Music, and Chocolate City brought with them their local and international (mostly American and English-language type) catalogues of pop, rock and rap, which the Nigerian fledgling middle class began to eagerly consume in costly CD format. Media deregulation also led to the introduction of cable television networks with dedicated music channels like MTV, MTV Base, Channel O, Soundcity, and OnTV to Nigerian audiences for the first time. As expected, there prevailed a somewhat underlining tension between the city of rural migrants and that of the cosmopolitan-globalizing-urban elite. This meant that a certain number of Lagosians could afford to pay for cable network transmissions to view media that was hitherto unavailable to the rest. Nevertheless, that margin has narrowed considerably in recent times. My opinion is that this simplistic opposition of the global and the local within Lagos city – sustained by the processes of rural-to-urban migration and urban reform– has catalyzed the emergence of a ‘Rap geography’ embedded in hybridized popular culture expressions such as Nigerian Hip-hop and Rap. These are themselves the result of global processes of capital flow and flight, urbanization, and the formation of new identities. In the following, I turn to a detailed discussion of a single song by a Nigerian rap artist to elucidate the inherent musical and textual strategies developed to (re-) imagine the city of Lagos.

Performing Locale: Lagos through Rap Music

The Nigerian rap musician in focus here is called Tupengo. He was born and raised in Agege, Lagos, Nigeria. According to the online blog *Nigeria Music Network*, the lyrical rapper has worked with a variety of first-rate artistes and producers like Sarkodie, Skales, Phenom, Kel and a host of Nigerian stars at home and abroad. Prior to his hit single titled 'Lagoscity' (2012), he released such

party bangers like *Oyashi* (2010). The song 'Lagos city' is recorded as a single-track album (available for download online via <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sLfOSveh5zw>). The cover photo of the album (Figure 1) shows the rap artiste with his beautiful ladies (presumably backup singers) in their sexy outfits in the background. In this song the rapper paints a verbal portrait of the city in which he grew. By inflecting the song with a typical vocabulary, and evoking specific places in the urban geography of Lagos, Tupengo creates a bright, and optimistic sonic aura of the city. Current reviews reveal that the song *Lagos city* was well received in Nigeria and abroad. Below is an excerpt of a bloggers' comment following its release.

I think it's about time people recognized Tupengo's genius. He's good, period. This is another track, which was created to 'big up' his hometown Lagos city, and the whole Hip-Hop community globally. If you are from Lagos...you know Lagosians rep [-resent] their town to the fullest. Many would agree that the song could serve as the new Anthem for Lagos.

The above review is particularly striking because the advocacy for a 'new anthem for Lagos' goes to heart of representation and identity. But what might this really mean for a broader academic debate? The music forming the multi-layered backing track for the rap is also appropriately bright in tone. The musical foundation of the track is represented in the schematic of some of the musical features of the song (see Example 1). However, not all of these features occur simultaneously throughout the three minutes and twenty-five seconds (3:25) track. The different layers enter and drop out at various times, constantly varying the texture within and between verses and chorus. Harmonically, the track is built on a continuous alternation between two held-out block chords: A minor and F, played on a synthesizer and a decayed electric guitar (staves 1, 2, and 4 in Example1).

Figure 1: Front cover of Tupengo's single album, Lagos city, showing the artiste with two 'Lagos city ladies' in the background.



While the organ-like timbre of the synthesizer is sustained throughout the measure, the twanged guitar chord decays quickly after the first beat of the measure. The sustained timbre of the synthesizer is varied sometimes by adding additional layers, say, synthesized violins to the texture (see stave 3 of Example 1). The serious minor key sound of the two alternating chords – i and VI in A minor – is accentuated by the voicing, with its parallel 3rds, 4ths, 5ths, and octaves, contributing to the haunting but assuring sound of the track.

Example 1: Schematic of parts of the musical track of Tupengo's 'Lagos city'.

The image displays a musical score for the track 'Lagos city' by Tupengo. The score is arranged in a multi-stem format with a 4/4 time signature and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The parts are as follows:

- synth. strigs (intro, verse, & chorus):** The top two staves. The upper staff contains a constant chord of Bb3, Eb3, and Gb3. The lower staff features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes: Gb4, Ab4, Bb4, C5, D5, Eb5, F5, G5, with a repeat sign at the end of the first measure.
- Electric Guitar:** The second staff from the top, which is mostly silent, with a melodic line starting in the second measure: Gb4, Ab4, Bb4, C5, D5, Eb5, F5, G5.
- synth. bass:** The third staff from the top, featuring a bass line with notes: Gb2, Ab2, Bb2, C3, D3, Eb3, F3, G3.
- Conga Drums:** The fourth staff from the top, showing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes: Gb4, Ab4, Bb4, C5, D5, Eb5, F5, G5.
- snare/high hat kick drum:** The fifth staff from the top, showing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes: Gb4, Ab4, Bb4, C5, D5, Eb5, F5, G5.
- Voice:** The bottom staff, with lyrics: "Hey!" and "Lag - os is the".

ans - wer. Lag - os! Lag - os! E - k'o-ni ba - ŋe o!

In the way samples are used, Tupengo employs recognizable melodic samples from folk and popular music. He uses such melodic samples from pre-existing recordings much less than other artistes/groups – preferring to compose his own original music from scratch. From the schematic of the song ‘Lagos City’, Tupengo obviously created some of the backing tracks by composing short melodies that serve as motifs or ostinatos, and realizing them on the computer using music software. He also added rhythm tracks, using samples of various percussion sounds (kick drums, toms, snares, high hats, etc.). Tupengo arguably records other instruments (like the conga/talking drums) ‘live’ in the studio and adds these sounds to the basic tracks produced on the computer. The artiste uses the latter technique to add a melodic part to the song, transcribed on the eighth staff of Example 1. However, the syncopated entry of the melodic fragments and the ostinato-like quality of the repetition are more akin to African-American rhythmic practices.

The song is given further rhythmic support by synthesized bass and percussion parts, the latter using kick drum and dampened snare sounds. This ‘rhythmic section’ is similar to the *break-beats* of American rap: in this case the bass and drums are mixed low in the track so that they do not

come across like the speaker-pounding *jeep-beats* of a more aggressive American rap variant. This is consistent with Tupengo’s emphasis on melody and harmony as support for the text in his earlier songs, with rhythmic play. Turning to the vocals and the lyrics of the song, Tupengo cultivates in this track his particular, recognizable rapping style. He makes use of *Brokin*⁵ (‘Nigrian pidgin English’), the English language, and his vernacular – the Yoruba language. He seemingly lengthens the last syllables of most lines, varies the vocal timbre of the held out vowels, and bends the vocal pitch downward on these syllables in ways that suggest passion and attraction – the aural equivalent of the look on the rappers’ and backup singers’ faces (see Figure 1).

Before the first verse, Tupengo is heard in the background singing the name of the city ‘Lagos’ in a declamatory, expression-filled voice (see the bottom staff in Example 1) with an interjection of the popular saying: *Eko oni baje o!* (‘Lagos will not be ruined, nay!’). As with most of his songs, Tupengo raps the first verse solo, and then alternates lines during the choruses. But even as he raps solo, other voices can be heard joining in on certain words or syllables, typically at line endings or on particularly important words – a common practice in African-American rap as well. In the following transcription and of parts of the lyrics of ‘Lagos city,’ I name the solo rapper (Tupengo) above his respective lines; underline the words or syllables in which the other voices briefly join in; and also indicate and underline in the English translation which words the other voices joined in on.

Tupengo – Lagos City

Lyrics & Music: Tupengo.

Verse 1

[Tupengo: solo rap, backup vocals join in on underlined words/syllables.]

Plenti story to tell abouti Lagos

Ilu Agege, ilu ogbon: ati kekere mo ti mo na

Omugo onimu ri re’le

If you de waka, I don die!

Fine, fine baby too mush

Lagos festival de here

Eyo festival de here

There’s so much to tell about Lagos

Of Agege, which I’ve known from childhood

The foolish leaves (Lagos) empty handed.

As you go about the city, whoa!

You’d notice the abundance of beautiful ladies

In here you’ll find the Lagos festival

The ‘Eyo’ festival is found here

We geti beta govunor
Plenti tings to carry us
We geti road, geti lite, geti food, geti skool
We geti Lagos...geti, we geti wota.

We have a very good governor
As well, we have infrastructure to support us
We have roads, electricity, food, and education
We have Lagos...we have, we have water.

Chorus

[Tupengo/backup vocals].

We'mo, we'mo, ilu Agege, ilu ogbon
Lagos city is where I come from

You have no idea about Agege, Lagos

We'mo, we'mo, mega city toun dazzul

You have no idea about the dazzling city of Lagos

We'mo, we'mo, omo beta dey here.

You do not know how profitable Lagos is.

Verse 2

[Tupengo: solo rap, backup vocals join in on underlined words/syllables].

Beautiful places, beautiful people; everyman inside to hustle

Look around you, and you will see what I'm saying

Eko oni baje o, gbogbo eniyan

Everyone, Lagos will not be ruined

Help each other o – na so we dey carry am go

Lend a helping hand – that's how we do it here

Fasola... e de here; Tinubu...e de here

Fashola (the governor) is here; Tinubu (former
governor) is here

Dangote... e de here; Mike Adenuga...e de here

Dangote (the magnate) is here; Mike Adenuga
(the tycoon) is here

Our father, who art in heaven...

-

Pray for Nigeria, stop the evil

-

Aka'wa, 'kawa gba'dura.

Let's join hands in prayer.

Chorus

Verse 3

[Tupengo: solo rap, backup vocals join in on underlined words/syllables].

Centre place for business

Centre place for music

Centre place for fun

Fun you can't let go!

Different things are happening

You do wanna go down there.

I don't wanna sleep and lose myself – I love this Lagos the way it is.

Omaka 'jola, omaka j'ola

Tomorrow brings joy

Eko lo ti sele, idobaale mo wa o

It's happening in Lagos, I doff my hat.

Eko oni baje o!

Lagos will not be ruined!

Discussion

Whereas a line-by-line analysis of this song would be helpful, limitations by space prevent me from discussing the song in that much detail. However, a few points deserve mention, and will illustrate one of the salient characteristics of Tupengo's rapping. Tupengo employs a dense intertextuality, with references to other texts such as Yoruba (Nigerian) proverbs, popular dictums, the lyrics of other folk and popular songs, and so on. Much of the song is packed by a vocabulary typical of Yoruba/Brokin song texts, including words such as *omugo* ('the ignorant'), *e de here* ('we've got it'), *adura* ('prayer'), *carry go* ('advance'), *ola* ('tomorrow'), *omo* ('bloke') and *ilu* ('town'). But besides this more general use of such vocabulary, the song itself contains very specific intertextual references.

For instance, verse one of the song opens by evoking the usual thoughts of most rural migrants to Lagos – of people who are often mesmerized by the sight and sounds of the city. The line '...I don die' is a popular expression of awe. This expression has often been used since the 1990s to evoke migrants' perceptions of what they expected to find by leaving their rural villages behind and moving to the city. By adding the expression 'Omugo onimu ri re'le' ('The foolish leaves (Lagos) empty handed'), Tupengo makes the statement ironic, implying most migrants find that making a life in the city is hard for the newcomers, and thus fail to make the most of Lagos.

The line 'Eko oni baje o' ('Lagos will not be ruined') is a derivative of the popular culture – appearing especially in media advertisements, and implying that by listening to particular radio or television stations, one is listening to the sound of the city itself. Tupengo's rap emplaces this famous line within the urban geography as he invokes the sights and sounds of 'beautiful

places/people', and different 'Eyo festivals'. By saying 'idobaale mo wa o' literally connoting high regards for someone or something, the rapper acknowledges his gratitude to some individuals (past and present) who have invested in and worked to make Lagos what it is. He does so in verse two when he names sitting and former governors, and entrepreneurs, and asks all to pray for the common good.

Trading off lines at the beginning of verse three, Tupengo with his back-up singers briefly invoke a nostalgic discourse of the boisterous city, citing it as the center for business, entertainment, and tourism. But this succinct evocation is quickly framed as ironic, and thus displaced by the line 'I don't wanna sleep and lose myself': referring to the contemporary reality of *omugo* ('the fool or ignorant') who would likely depart Lagos empty-handed. In the same verse, the rapper explicitly evokes and juxtaposes the different ways the cosmopolitan-globalizing-urban elite and rural migrant perceive the city. In all, apart from referring to the city of Lagos as a whole, Tupengo conjures more specific aspects of the geography of the city, mentioning, for example, Agege where he grew up. In the chorus of the song, the rapper employs the typical 'we're-number-one' type of expression often associated with American rap. The difference here is that he phrases it in a way that again emplaces him firmly within the city – referring to Lagos as the city of cities.

Conclusion

So far, the argument has focused on what might be called the poetics of the glocal. In his discussion of Rap and Hip-hop outside the USA, Tony Mitchell argued that rap has become, for many around the world, a 'tool for reworking local identity.'⁶ In this article, I have attempted to show how this *reworking* of local identity is quite explicit in the case of Nigerian rap from Lagos. In his appropriation of the globalized genre of rap, Tupengo has thoroughly reterritorialized and indigenized the genre – embodying in his rap the sounds and discourses of other indigenous musical genres, and creating a hybrid musical expression that serves as a vehicle for local imaginations of place.

This imagination of place is accomplished not just through the discourses surrounding Nigerian popular music, but also through the words and sounds of rap songs themselves. The profuse intertextuality of Tupengo's raps with texts of Nigerian popular culture, for example, emplaces the rap within a specifically Nigerian space. There is also an implied acknowledgement of the

connection Nigerian rap songs have to the long extraction of popular expressions and songs about Lagos and the country in general. The Nigerian rap musicians draw all these sources together in, and emplace themselves within, their own musical imagination of the urban landscape of the city. Attention to the poetics of their rap can thus provide us with some insight into how rappers can use the texts and sounds of rap to imagine their localities and emplace themselves within these imagined places. It is perhaps ironic that Nigerian rappers like Tupengo inadvertently comment on and critique how globalization has shaped Lagos by appropriating, indigenizing, and locally re-emplacing the globalized musical genre of rap. The case study discussed here could easily be used to construct a narrative about how local rappers appropriate global commercial popular culture forms to talk back to and resist globalization. I think, however, that the dynamics of such a discourse would be slightly more complex. I would suggest that Tupengo's rap, and similar Nigerian raps, embody and embrace the dimensions of the city of the globalized cosmopolitan – after all, contemporary Lagos is a consequence of processes of globalization.

More over, regardless of the differences in consumption patterns based on class, ethnicity, and religious orientation, Lagosians generally share a common contemporary urban culture, which is based on a synthesis of local tradition with modern global culture. Tupengo's particular familiarity with the rap idiom is made possible by the continued opening up of the Nigerian mass media to American popular culture. Even diaspora influences of Nigerian rappers in countries like the UK, who first introduced Nigerian-language rap to audiences abroad, did not simply do a direct UK-to-Nigeria-to-UK flow. The flow was made possible by and mediated through global processes – significantly, the partnership between local Nigerian record companies and multinationals.

Generally, Nigerian rappers have indigenized the global musical genre of rap and hybridized it with local genres of Nigerian popular music. Tupengo, for instance, has fused into rap the sounds and discourses of Nigerian folk music, text, and Popular culture. In the song 'Lagos city' he employs the forces of intertextuality and appropriation to re-emplace within their own music existing ways of representing the city. As Nigerian rap globalizes itself in the crucible of Lagos, Nigerian rappers in the city continually explore ways of drawing on and synthesizing the global and the vernacular in order to re-imagine the urban landscape; and in the process envision their own local identities in the globalizing city. All in all, this paper has explored how both the object

of scrutiny – the cosmopolitan city – and the vehicle for their expression – Nigerian (language) rap music – is implicated in both local and global processes. From listening to Tupengo’s Lagos City, we hear the local pulse of globalization, and in the rap we also hear the intricate, interpenetrating counterpoint of the local and the global.

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Notes

1. Bennett 2000; Stokes 1994a; Whiteley, Bennett and Hawkins 2004.
2. **Uchenna Ikonne runs the popular ‘old school’ Nigerian music blog: ‘With Comb & Razor’, and he’s a huge collector of all groovy music to come out of Nigeria in the past three decades. Together, we listened to Nigerian rap released on vinyl records between 1981 and 1991.**
3. The National Population Commission.
4. The *New York Times* estimate.
5. Over 90 million Nigerians speak and understand what is commonly called the Nigerian Pidgin English or ‘Brokin’. This brand of lingua franca is an amalgamation of words derived from the English language, Creole, and slangs from the various vernaculars. The linguistic flavours thus differ from one geo-political part of the country to another. However, it is widely regarded as the common man’s means of eloquent oration. (For further readings, see, Akhimien, E. Pius (2004) ‘The Use of “How are you?” in Nigerian Society; and Ihemere, K. Uchechukwu (2006) ‘A basic description and analytic treatment of Noun clauses in Nigerian Pidgin’).
6. Mitchell 2001a: pp.1–2.

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